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Vol. II.

THE CHRISTIAN PILOT, AND GOSPEL MORALIST.

EDITED BY GEORGE HARRIS.

JANUARY, 1850.

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THE USES TO BE MADE OF PUBLIC CALAMITIES, AND THE SPIRIT WITH WHICH THEY SHOULD BE CONTEMPLATED.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM STEVENS, OF MAIDSTONE.

2 Chron. vii. 12-14.

"And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice. If I shut up Heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; if my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

I DO not purpose to enter into any discussion of the question whether the words I have just read may be regarded as a statement of a literal occurrence: that "the Lord appeared unto Solomon by night" in a visible or audible manner, and made such a communication as is there related; or whether it is language used in conformity with what we know to have been a very common, a very devout and pious custom, of ascribing the good, and virtuous, and patriotic and holy suggestions of their own minds, as well as deeds to which those suggestions gave birth, to the spirit, the influence, or the hand of God. Neither, likewise, is it my intention to stay to inquire into what were the probable views of Solomon regarding the efficacy of public social prayer in the temple of God, under the pressure of public calamities, in respect to *the act itself*. But one thing may be observed as being very clear, that he did regard it the *duty* of the people to be not only worshippers but doers, that they ought not to feel content with "humbling themselves and praying and seeking the Lord," but must *turn from their sinful ways*,

that "if there be dearth in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting and mildew, locusts or caterpillars, if their enemies besiege them in the cities of their land, whatsoever sore or whatsoever sickness there be," then it becomes their duty, not only to gather themselves in humiliation before the Lord, but to cast it about in their thoughts, wherein their own sins against the law of God may have brought their calamity upon them, and with a steady resolve to go and sin no more.

I have chosen the words of my text, therefore, as an appropriate foundation for some remarks I purpose to offer on the uses we should make of public calamities, and the spirit with which they should be contemplated.

Every event of Providence is the voice of God, speaking to us of right things; every *affliction* as well as every *positive good*; every mournful event which befalls the *people*, as well as every sad occurrence which happens to *individuals* or *families*. It becomes us at all times reverently to attend to that voice, and seriously and thoughtfully to endeavour to understand its full import. Let me then observe—

1. *That public calamities should recal us, as a people, to sober reflection upon our general rules of conduct.* I will not say that calamities are always, or wholly, the natural consequence of man's errors, of his presumption or of his neglect, but I fear I may but too truly affirm that they owe much of their magnitude or their virulence to the grievous mistakes he makes in arrangements of the very first importance, or to some gross neglect of natural laws which he fully understands. Whenever they befall us, therefore, they should rouse us from our lethargy. They should prompt us to study the circumstances under which they have arisen or by which they have been increased. They should set us to institute a careful inquiry into everything that can throw a light upon their character, with the view of ascertaining how much of them has sprung from our errors of judgment or conduct, how much lies within the power of man to mitigate, how much to prevent their recurrence. Such inquiry into the circumstances attending that sore affliction which rested upon some parts of this highly favoured empire but a few years since, and from which indeed they may even yet be scarcely said to be

delivered, has but too clearly indicated how great a portion of the suffering it created, of the wailing and mourning it spread through the land, originated in a long succession of *legislative* errors. And of that awful visitation which lately was resting upon us so oppressively, which has carried the most piercing sorrow into so many happy homes, which has swept away so many thousands from the face of the earth, and spread universal terror and dismay through the people, a careful inquiry into the circumstances attending it has been followed with a similar result. Mysterious as the nature and characteristics of the malady appear to be, allowing of no general rules to be applied, whereby its attacks may, with infallible certainty, be avoided; striking down here and there where previous observation upon its modes of attack would have led us to suppose its appearance most improbable, yet enough has been brought to light to show that it owed the greater, much the greater part of its conquests to causes which we have entirely under our own controul, to ill chosen localities for residence, to crowding together in vast numbers in small abodes, to filth and intemperance, to scanty and unwholesome diet, to impure water, to imperfect ventilation and drainage, to the decomposition of vegetable and animal remains in the midst of human habitations, and others similar to these. You have most probably seen, in the statistics of the disease which have appeared in the public papers, a statement to this effect, that in the districts of the Metropolis and its neighbourhood, while in one part only eight out of ten thousands fell its victims, in another it reached the large proportion of 225, and that in the former such causes as I have mentioned had the *least*, and in the latter the *most* frequent existence. And I doubt not it would be a very edifying inquiry, as showing how very much of the devastation occasioned by this malady was owing to man's grievous sins against the well-known laws under which the all-wise and benevolent Creator has placed the maintenance of our health, if we could ascertain how many of those eight were subject to the influence of one or more of those different causes. Not improbably the result of that inquiry would show, that after deducting such cases, the number would be very inconsiderable indeed.

This is the first use we should make of public calamities: they should excite to the endeavour to ascertain all we are able respecting the circumstances in which they are found, in order that we may know if, and to what extent, they are in our own power to control, to mitigate, to expel, and to prevent.

2. This necessary information being gained, the next use they should prompt us to make of them is, to *resolve on atoning for the past in the best way we are able, and taking immediate steps for carrying out our knowledge into practice.* This is the object to be answered by their infliction. Believing in the benignant and wise government of God, as I do, I cannot entertain a doubt that their appointment is designed to lead to the remedy of defects in our social and private rules of conduct. And by neglecting to attend to the Divine voice, which admonishes through them, by delaying to apply our knowledge of their causes to the remedy of the evils, we shall be making it needful for our own good that they should return, we shall be inviting the return, and return they probably repeatedly will, until that admonition is regarded.

3. They should teach us to stand in awe of the dread power of the Almighty Ruler; and when we once perceive the way in which we should walk, forthwith to enter thereon, *lest a louder and a sterner voice should rouse us from our perilous inactivity.* For He suffers none of his purposes to be perpetually and for ever frustrated. He may bear long with human folly and crime, but a day of retribution comes at last. If we violate his physical laws, we are at first, perhaps, gently admonished by suffering. If we continue in the same course, the rebuke becomes stronger. He who trespasses against the laws of health, by indulgence in excesses of any kind, may at first be permitted to do so with but a mild reprimand; but perseverance in his transgression is sure to bring more painful reproofs, acuter sufferings, until, if no reform be effected, the gift of life is withdrawn. The dreadful malady that lately visited us seems to be that sterner voice. To admonitions in softer tones we had been deaf. We could see malignant fevers and consumption slaying their thousands and their ten thousands yearly, well knowing what were the sins of which they were, in very many cases, the

natural consequences. But still our course has been the same. We have known to do good and done it not. The destroying angel has laid a gentler hand upon his victims; and their less hasty and less painful departure by these from among the living, has been witnessed, if with regret yet not with terror, and our transgressions have not been forsaken. Still the same disregard to the righteous claims of the humbler classes, the same wretched fare in the midst of that abundance which a beneficent God is ever pouring forth for man's sustenance, the same neglect of all sanitary regulations, with but partial exceptions, the same crowding together in small and unhealthy abodes. And then does the Divine command bid the minister of death go forth more fully armed with terrors, that that benignant voice may be no longer unheeded. *This* time may we listen to that voice, that a yet greater calamity may not become necessary to recal us to our duty.

4. Public calamities should lead us to look well to our goings, *lest other storms be gathering*. Sometimes under the Divine Providence they appear to be directed to one object, sometimes to another; now to the remedy of social regulations which regard the public health; now to those which affect the comfort and well-being of the community; now to those which influence the progress of the moral, the intellectual, and the religious nature of man. Sometimes we have famine; sometimes pestilence; sometimes wars and civil commotions; all arising as natural consequences of, and designed to rectify those errors or neglects of man, which obstruct the welfare and the improvement of society. This I believe to be their primary object under the wise and good government of God. We have lightnings and tempests to cleanse and purify the breath of life, We have corresponding commotions in the moral atmosphere to disturb and dispel accumulated evils affecting the improvement and spiritual well-being of man. But neither do I doubt that they have a secondary purpose to effect, and that is to produce in us a thoughtful forecast as to our general course as a people, and to lead us to inquire if in any other particulars we are transgressors against those laws which govern the general happiness and progress of the community.

The people, the multitude, the masses, however unwelcome the thought may be to those who have seemed to enjoy the peculiar favour of Heaven, are as much the creatures of God, as much made in his own likeness, as much loved and cared for by Him, as the most exalted and prosperous. And they are never forgotten, and we may confidently trust never will be forsaken by him. As long as their present well being and their future good are obstructed by the ignorance, the folly, the crime, the selfishness, the impiety of those who have the means of ordering it otherwise, so long, we are instructed by every public calamity that is brought upon us, will God rise up and show himself as the pleader of their cause. And this he will do again and again until every hindrance to their advancement shall be removed, if removed they are not, by our own wise and prudent anticipation. May we have the wisdom to listen to this instruction, that other visitations may not be sent upon us. May we seriously reflect upon what are every man's natural rights that is born into this world. May we seriously reflect that every man has a right to maintenance who is willing to labour; that every man has a right to the key of the temple of knowledge who is willing to receive it; that every man has a right to good government, or to have the power of self-government replaced in his hands. Of these possessions the Father of all the families of the earth will see that they are ultimately enjoyed by all kindreds, and tongues, and peoples. And happy they who, receiving, profit from every indication of his purposes! Happy they who thus make unnecessary any of those terrible admonitions, those fearful catastrophes which will be sure to overtake those nations in which these rights are long and obstinately withheld!

I have spoken of the instruction which we as a people should derive from, and the uses we should make of public calamities. But let us remember that a community is composed of individuals. Each individual is one of the people. On him, therefore, does it rest, as an individual, as much as on any other person, in his own sphere of action, however wide that sphere or however contracted, be his influence great or small, to contribute all he can towards that amount of change which the people,

collectively, are required to effect. No one may hold back from this labour who has any modicum of power to contribute, on the plea that it is but small, or that there is a sufficiency of others to accomplish it. These are but the pleas of indolence or of selfishness. All may aid. All may co-operate in demanding a full recognition of every man's natural rights and most needful possessions; every man may unite with others in requiring that every obstruction to a fair remuneration for labour shall be thrown down; all may aid in demanding a provision for the education of the entire people; all may assist in obtaining good, and wise, and protecting, and equal laws; all may help to procure effective sanitary regulations; and in ways too numerous to mention may very many communicate assistance, wise counsel, useful information, and place instructive examples before their neighbours or dependents; all of which would prove of incalculable value in helping to carry forward the great and benevolent purposes of Heaven. May each one of us be duly impressed by the awful scourge with which this nation, in common with many other parts of the world, has been afflicted. May it awaken and teach us our duty to the public. May it give increased energy to the efforts we may have begun to make. And may it be the means of taking away from us every cause of self reproach for the time to come,

(To be concluded in our next No.)

RICH AND POOR.

No. I.

The barrier, which divides one class of a community from another, varies in different ages and states of Society. In an early stage of civilization, it is usually the difference of *birth*; and the great division is into the high-born, and the low-born; in a more advanced era, when luxury and refinement have reached their height, *riches* are more often made the touch-stone, to determine a man's position. In the former instance, the high birth of the nobles may be generally accompanied by riches, as is the case in Russia at the present day, but in that

stage of civilization, wealth is not all-powerful; and it is their birth, not their riches, which gives them importance in the eyes of their countrymen. So also when riches become the chief thing looked to, nobility of birth may still gain some respect, but the want of it is fully made up, by the possession of wealth, as we see among ourselves, when a millionaire, who can boast of no aristocratic descent, may yet, merely because he is immensely rich, rank with the highest noblemen, and be received on equal terms in their society.

This change in the general estimate of what entitles a man to a high station in society, is exemplified in the history of ancient Rome. In the early part of her career, we find all her citizens classed under one or other of the two great divisions, the Patricians and Plebeians, to one of which every family belonged; and no acquisitions, however great, could give a man who was born a Plebeian, a right to enjoy the privileges of those who were by birth members of the dominant section of the population. But as the conquests of the Roman people extended, and wealth was brought into their coffers by successful wars, the political inequality of the two classes grew less and less, until it finally disappeared, and the prestige of high descent lost its power, and it was at length found, before the termination of the Republic, that he had the greatest influence, who possessed the most wealth. A few individuals engrossed the property of the community among themselves; and with their great accumulations, there co-existed a fearful amount of hopeless, and therefore reckless poverty, a state of things, which, assisted by other causes, eventually brought about the ruin of the empire. Another example of the same fact is presented in the history of our own country. The great distinction of the feudal times depended upon birth; this was also accompanied in many instances by wealth, but the poorest Baron was still considered far above the richest Commoner. This state of things has been gradually giving way to another, which is still in process of development among us, and tends to make the only existing division, that between the Rich and the Poor. In the United States of North America, this latter form is carried to its height, where there is no such thing as a hereditary upper class, but

each man rises in rank (especially in the great commercial cities,) exactly in proportion to his rise in wealth, a state of society which caused Dr. Channing to say, "The distinction which is still made in society by wealth, is, perhaps, the strongest proof which can be named of the very limited efficacy of the Gospel. Is it not undeniable, that the Christian spirit of humanity, of brotherhood, is resisted and repressed more by the prevalent estimate of wealth, than by almost any other cause?"*

Are there not, meanwhile, serious indications among ourselves, of the approach of a state of society, when all other distinctions will be swallowed up in the single one of rich and poor? The watchword of our civilization, attempt to disguise it as we may, is money. The ordinary notions of respectability, pre-eminence, rank, and dignity, all spring from this one root. While we look with every year less and less respect at rank arising from high birth, show more symptoms of an inclination to ridicule ancestral dignity, and to scorn hereditary greatness, we all engage more or less in the race for wealth, and we all bow, to some extent or other, to the men who are most successful in that race. He who is richest in a town or district, takes the lead in it, as a matter of course. If he meet another rich man, he treats him, at once and naturally, as a congenial and familiar being, without pausing to ask about his intellect, his acquirements, or his moral character. If it is wished to keep any amusement or place of public resort, select and fit for the attendance of the pure and right minded, it is said, in order to do this, you must fix a high price of admission, as though the rich were, necessarily from that fact, respectable, in the true sense of the word. If a man who has been poor becomes rich, he at once changes his position; he does not become wiser, more clever, or more virtuous, but he rises into notice, is courted and flattered, is welcomed among them by the magnates of society, easily steps into a seat in Parliament, and is a public character. Perhaps a poor man is full of intelligence, inspired with the glorious promptings of genius, warmed with the noblest sympathies, but spite of all this, he is only patro-

* Memoir, Vol. III. p. 49.

nised at most, by the "great and noble;" let him inherit an estate and he then is one of them. It is true men of genius, poets, artists, and authors, and men of education, especially clergymen, are often received in "high society," even when they are known to be poor. But to be so, they must put on the semblance of riches, they must be well clothed, fashionably dressed; we never hear of a fustian jacket mixing with coats of broad cloth in a nobleman's palace, or of the poverty of an artizan's dress, being so forgotten on account of the nobility of the heart which beats beneath it, that he should be received on terms of equality, among "Gentlemen." Where we cannot have riches, we seek to have the outward appearance of them. Poverty, confessed and apparent, gains little honour in our day and generation.

These facts, characteristic of our present state of civilization, have been alluded to, to introduce and confirm the assertion, that the great division of society among us, is that between the rich and the poor. Mammon is the god of our idolatry; we fall down and worship the golden calf. Money is the root of our present state as a community; the touchstone, in our common estimate, of greatness, worth, and nobility; the origin of our primary distinctions.

It is evident, that like all idolatry, this worshipping of a creature, to the neglect of the Creator, must necessarily be in itself very injurious, both to individuals, and to the whole community. But the evil effect now to be dwelt upon, is the disruption of classes consequent upon it. Social distinctions founded on birth, leading at last to a reaction which throws off all hereditary nobility, have produced frightful convulsions, and strange eccentricities; but a distinction which would lead in its remote effects to a crusade against property, is much more injurious. What is at present the consequence of the supreme importance attached to riches? All England is divided into two classes; those who possess so much that they are above all care and anxiety about the necessities of life, and indulge in its superfluities and luxuries, are the rich; and those who have to struggle for the daily bread which supports themselves and their offspring, and are without provision for the future, and many of the comforts of the

present, are the poor. What is called the middle class, consists of individuals who belong (in feeling if in nothing else,) to those above, or to those below them; thus the young tradesman commencing life, and struggling hard with its difficulties, can sympathize with the poor; while the successful man of commerce aspires to be one of the rich, and by care and prudence becomes so.

These two extremes, produced by the luxurious habits and artificial wants of an advanced civilization, coexist around us. They meet in our streets; there the possessor of thousands may jostle the half starved beggar; in the same town are found the palaces of the one, and the hovels of the other; at the same moment, Dives may feast and Lazarus may starve, but what bond of union, what common feeling, what sympathy is there, between the two classes? If a poor man is sinking under disease, would he ever think of sending to his rich neighbour, to ask him to come and nurse him? No, he would apply to a brother as poor as himself. The most the poor expect from the rich, and all that (except in a few instances of noble exception,) they ever get from them, is not sympathy, not attention, not true Christian Charity; the most they hope for, and the only boon they ask, is money.

How every one would stare and wonder, if they were to see a well dressed man of fashion descend from his handsome chariot, and grasp warmly the hard hand of an artizan. Yet perhaps there is equal knowledge, and equal goodness, in each of these men. How strange it would be thought, if a lady were found by the bedside of a pauper, not by way of charity, patronage, half insulting almsgiving, but feeling and acting like a sister. In the "unequal marriages," that astound society occasionally, the great difference between the parties is, generally, not in education, not in habits, not in tastes, but in money. Wealth is therefore set up as a great gulf; those who are on the one side cannot communicate with those who are on the other; it is an impassible barrier, and neither sympathy, nor friendship, nor mutual aid, nor love, nor admiration, can be allowed to penetrate it.

Reflection and observation will probably convince every one, that the preceding statement is not overcharged, and that it correctly represents the general state of things,

though there are of course isolated exceptions. Nor is it difficult to perceive the evils thence arising, to both classes. The division of feeling, the destruction of fraternal affection, the mutual heart-burnings, suspicions and jealousies, which it causes, are but too apparent. The rich are led to despise, neglect, and care nothing for those thus separated from them; to think of them as a mass of discordant elements, to be cajoled into passive endurance, or to be kept down by brute force; as distinguished for ignorance, brutality and vice; and as presenting nothing to admire and love, every thing to avoid and fear. The poor are induced to envy those who are placed in apparently superior circumstances to themselves, to covet their possessions, and regard the possessors as proud, haughty, tyrannical and selfish. Thus, mutual ignorance produces mutual misrepresentation. For want of being brought together, the two classes cannot understand each other; and while many of the rich are toiling and labouring in thought for the welfare of their poorer brethren, and many of the poor are fine examples of self-restraint, patience, and persevering exertion in the face of disheartening difficulties, neither sees the other as he really is, and neither therefore loves the other as he deserves to be loved. And, moreover, this mutual ignorance, not only exaggerates their respective faults, but in a great measure produces them. To whatever extent the poor are ignorant, brutal, and full of bad passions, it is their experience of sorrow, their sense of unmerited neglect, and their exclusive association with those who are like themselves, which have made them so. And if the rich are selfish, careless and tyrannical, it is from knowing so little of human woe, and hardship, either in themselves or others, and from not being taught to see virtues, and recognize affections, under the rough dress and toil-stained skin of the labourer.

But the prospect for the future, if things go on as they are at present, is even darker than the view now before us. Already is there an antagonism felt between the rich and the poor, a jealousy on the part of the masses, towards great capitalists, a half expressed, but lively notion, that all accumulated wealth is robbery of the people. Why else do working men, assembled for deliberation on

any topic, social or political, listen with more attention to one of their own body, and receive more unhesitatingly his statements, than they listen to a member of the wealthy class? Why else have we contests between the employer and employed, and as much contention, as though the interests of the one were exactly opposed to the interests of the other? The political economist will teach that what increases capital, must increase employment; that what really benefits the rich, must benefit the poor; and he will urge the two classes to throw away all mutual jealousy; but yet, as a matter of fact, our poor men *are* apt to look on the rich as their natural enemies, and to show a degree of animosity towards the possessors of property, which though slight and occasional at present, may be the beginning of a fearful end. For let the present state of things continue, the accumulations of capital in the hands of a few increasing, the want and consequent demoralization of the masses becoming worse and worse, and the effect must be the same here, as elsewhere, an ultimate struggle between the classes, a fierce and fatal war between socialism and wild democracy on the one hand, and a selfish oligarchy on the other; and the only possible result of such a struggle, would be the destruction of property, the loss of life, to a degree which we can scarcely conceive of, and finally complete national degradation, if not destruction, and the retarding of civilization for many centuries, in this quarter of the globe.

Such fearful consequences can be prevented, only, by the levelling of the barrier, which divides those who ought to be brethren, and the fusion of all classes into one; the valuing men for their true greatness and worth, not for their wealth, often a mere accident; and the exhibition, on the part of each member of society, of the spirit by which society can be truly served. These ends are to be promoted by *individual* effort, not by any one scheme, or any one united plan of action, but by the persevering labours of the good, and far-sighted, and self-sacrificing, each in his own sphere of usefulness, each according to the peculiar powers which God has given him, each being contented to do a little, without seeing the fruit of his labours, satisfied to know that the time of harvest must sooner or later arrive.

To point out the specific efforts and the peculiar self-restraints, by which these important benefits are to be gained, must be reserved for a future article. Meanwhile let us pray that the time may be at hand, when the rich and the poor shall meet together as brethren, remembering that there is One God and Father over all.

J. W.

THE PARABLES OF CHRIST.

LECTURE V.

The Net, MATT. XII. 47-50; *The Two Debtors*, LUKE VII. 41, 42.

(Concluded from page 494, Vol. I.)

IN following the steps of our Lord, we have often to observe, that the instructions which he delivered to the people, arose out of passing occurrences. Thus, in the course of his benevolent labours, after concluding the foregoing parables, we are told, that "one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him." That is, partake with him of a friendly meal. "And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And, behold a woman in the city, who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment." Luke vii. 36-38.

This unfortunate woman is here said to be "a sinner." That is, she *had* been a sinner; for it is evident that she was at this time a sincere penitent; and it is probable, that she had frequently heard Jesus previously, and had become a penitent from his preaching. She had reason to bless his ministration in regard to herself; and she shows her gratitude, her veneration and love to her divine benefactor, in the manner described by these words. She brought with her a box of ointment. The box itself consisted of "a soft and beautiful kind of marble;" and the ointment was an "unguent of balsam," of which "the Orientals made a free use," and "of various aromatic and perfumed oils." (*Livermore*). With this, she stood behind Jesus, "at his feet." That would be the situation

she would occupy in approaching him; for Jesus would not *sit*, but *recline*; and "the usual position, in reclining at meals, placed the feet on the outside of the couch from the table." (*Livermore*). She then began to wash his feet, and to anoint them. She wiped them with the hairs of her head, and kissed them. "It was the custom of the East to furnish water to wash the feet, and oil to anoint the head, and to salute the guests with a kiss when they entered; usages, which the ceremonious Pharisee had perhaps neglected from some scruple respecting Jesus." The woman stood thus, in this interesting position, engaged in these kind offices, and her tears flowed freely all the time. She would naturally attract the attention of all around; particularly that of the host. And so it was. For at this point, the narrative goes on to say, "Now when the Pharisee who had bidden him" (that is, Jesus,) "saw it, he spake within himself, saying," (in a low murmuring voice, but sufficiently loud to be heard,) "'This man, if he were a Prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.'" (39.)

The Pharisee would regard Jesus with a suspicious eye; and Jesus would, no doubt, on his part, intently fix his eye on the Pharisee. For a moment they would stand thus, earnestly looking at each other; till at length, "Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor who had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty." "About £16. 2s. 11d., and £1. 12s. 3d. respectively." (*Livermore*.) "And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both." (40-42.)

Such were the circumstances, out of which this parable arose, the parable of *The Two Debtors*. And our Saviour immediately made the application, by appealing to the Pharisee himself. The Two Debtors, of very different sums, because they had no means to pay their debts, were freely forgiven. "Tell me, therefore," said Jesus to the Pharisee, "which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest

thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore, I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." (42-50.)

This is the parable of the Two Debtors, and this is the application of it in the words of our Lord. It derives considerable interest from all the circumstances connected with it, and out of which it arose.

It is evidently designed, in the first instance, to reprove spiritual pride. The Pharisee eyed the woman with contempt as a sinful, degraded creature; and with self-complacency, as to his own fancied righteousness, he could not endure that Jesus, a servant of God and a prophet, should even so much as *touch* her, lost and degraded a sinner as she was. His whole behaviour seemed to say, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou." But what strong, yet just, reproof is conveyed in the words of Jesus, "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee." As if he had said, "Simon, think a little, reflect for a moment. Thy behaviour is not proper. It is exceedingly unkind and ungenerous; and while thou art judging unmercifully, thou art judging unjustly at the same time. If she were a sinner, she would deserve thy pity; and as God has graciously blotted out all her sins, and extended his free and rich mercy to her, it is not for man to condemn her, but to be compassionate to her, even as the Father has been compassionate. Thou esteemest thyself to be righteous, and despisest others. Thou knowest not what manner of spirit thou art of. Thou doest not see thyself as thou art; for if thou didst, thou wouldst have reason to humble thyself to the dust, as this once sinful, but now penitent creature before thee."

There is nothing more inconsistent with religion, which

teaches us humility, than spiritual pride ; and there can be nothing more unamiable. For how displeasing must it be to God to plume ourselves in his presence that we are better than others, that we are his peculiar favourites, while others are despised and abandoned by him, as polluted and degraded beings, utterly lost to him, and denounced by him to perish for ever ! How shocking thus to exult in his presence, and, as it were, to invoke him also to exult ! Surely, this is not the way to recommend ourselves to his favour. And if we looked into our own hearts we might see great reason for humility and self-abasement. "Cast out the beam out of thine own eye ; and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote out of thy brother's eye." And how should the Apostle's admonition at all times impress us, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall !"

The parable is intended to teach us mercy to poor unfortunate sinners. They ought to receive our pity, and not our scorn ; and we should seek to reclaim them, and not despise them, and cut them off. They are sufferers, and we should show compassion to them. They are wandering in the paths of misery, and we should kindly endeavour to save them, and lead them into the ways of pleasantness and peace. We should, no doubt, wish to receive mercy ourselves if we were in their melancholy state. We must be deeply conscious, in many respects, of our own unworthiness and sinfulness. As we would, therefore, receive mercy ourselves, let us be ready to shew mercy to others. The Scripture says, "If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he who converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness ; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Our own conscious infirmities ought to move us to feel for the infirmities of others. And we should always remember that "he shall have judgment without mercy, who hath showed no mercy ; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment."

Livermore says, that "Jesus would justify his receiving the offices of the woman, by showing the rigid Pharisee that she had that faith and love, which are of great price in

the sight of God, and that her sins, though many, were forgiven. She was the debtor of five hundred pence, while Simon was one of only fifty. Her great affection and enthusiasm, therefore, and earnest offices of kindness, were attributable to the great forgiveness of which she had been the object. Since the greater are one's sins, the more cause there is for gratitude and love, when they have been cancelled by Divine mercy. *For she loved much*; or, therefore she loved much. Her love was the effect, not the cause, of her forgiveness. The order of the process was—faith, penitence, forgiveness, and then love. * * * Jesus does not say, I forgive your [*thy*] sins, but, with an intimate knowledge of the Divine will, simply pronounces them to be forgiven. In a similar way, his Apostles were to forgive sins, (Matt. xvi. 19, xviii. 18; John xx. 23). *Thy faith hath saved thee, &c.* Our Lord would still further defend this deeply penitent woman against the rebuffs of the unwilling Pharisee. This whole narrative is a beautiful exemplification of the humanity and tenderness of Jesus to the contrite, and of the cheering encouragement which his Gospel extends to those whose sins are many and deep-dyed, that, if they repent, they shall find mercy and grace to help in time of need. May we not learn from this history what should be our disposition of heart in meeting and associating with those who have strayed from the path of virtue! Mercy, pity, sympathy, are the proper sentiments, (Gal. vi. 6)."

The parable teaches us the free forgiveness of God. It "illustrates," says the writer just quoted, "the free mercy of God to the sinner, without the price of blood, or the satisfaction of a substitute." The two debtors had nothing to pay with, and they were "*frankly*" forgiven by their merciful creditor. That is, they were *freely* forgiven; for there is not a word in the whole English language which expresses freedom, cordiality, unreservedness, kind and generous dispositions, more strikingly, more fully, or more emphatically, than the word *frankly*. It expresses all that is free and hearty, all that is kind and generous, that we can conceive. And God forgives the sinner in this spirit of all goodness and benignity. The parable, therefore, teaches us the free forgiveness of God to sinners, when they repent of their sins, return to him with truly contrite

hearts, and manifest an anxious desire to obey his holy commandments in the future. Yes, it is most evident that when he does thus forgive them, it is on the condition of sincere repentance, leading to a return to obedience. For nothing else is manifest on the part of the poor suffering penitent at the feet of Jesus. She was pronounced forgiven, because she evinced that she had sincerely repented. Her tears evidently showed all this. And Jesus, to comfort and cheer her, said, "Thy sins are forgiven. Go in peace." There is, therefore, "forgiveness with God, that he may be feared."

May his goodness lead all who are wandering from Him to repentance, that they may be saved, and find rest for their souls, and receive divine refreshings from His presence to fill them with peace, with love, and joy !

WORK-A-DAY HYMNS.

No. IV.

(BY JOSEPH DARE, AUTHOR OF THE GARLAND OF GRATITUDE, ETC.)

WHERE do earth's truly noble dwell,
 In splendid halls, on gorgeous thrones ?
 Or in lone cot and lonelier cell,
 Where labour pines, where freedom groans ?
 Oh ! not in scenes of pomp or power
 We find the great and good alone :
 A favouring hand may nurse the flower,
 The *oak* 'mid storms and wastes is thrown.

We envy not the patriot's wreath,
 The warrior's fame, the merchant's meed,
 But mourn the dungeon'd exile's death,
 The toiler's tears, the good man's need.
 Earth's nobles boast of wealth and clan,
 Heaven's nobles know nor name nor caste,
 Mind is the measure of the man,
 Duty his richest holocaust.

Half-clothed, half-fed, and all untaught,
 The *man*, who holds his onward way,
 Unsoiled by vice, by wealth unbought,
 With hope lit by the eternal ray ;

The *widow* toiling for her brood,
 Reckless of scorn and poverty,
 By want, by sickness, unsubdued,
 Till each some opening prospect see:—

The *youth*, who, by the bench, or loom,
 Or walking, turns the treasur'd page,
 To learn of man's and nature's doom,
 And step himself abreast the age,
 These are true Nobles. These become
 Co-workers with the Almighty hand;
 These make the waste with roses bloom,
 And guilt and misery flee the land.

THE MEANS BY WHICH RELIGIOUS ZEAL MAY BE QUICKENED.

No. I.

THE INCREASED PIETY AND DEVOTEDNESS OF MINISTERS.

It is incumbent upon religious Instructors and Guides to live a truly religious life. This is a central truth which has become deeply rooted in my mind, that no Minister can exercise a religious influence, except he be in the first place a religious and Christian minded man. And if he be so, then every word, every action, will have a virtuous and ennobling, and hallowing influence. I have got a fast hold of this truth, that a good man leads others to goodness, by a sort of virtue or influence that proceeds from him, and that it is not so much by expounding precepts, or enforcing laws that men are led to the right and the good; as by seeing righteousness and goodness exemplified, shining in the life, and breathing in the conversation of him to whom they look for instruction and guidance.

Now on this point, the most earnest of us who minister in holy things, must lament our deficiencies. The best of us know, we have fallen short of the standard of the perfect man in Christ Jesus. We know that when to will was present with us, how to do good we forgot. We know that the law of our members wars against the law of our spirit. We can recall very many instances where we have not lived a truly divine life, where we can bring charges against the propriety of our thoughts, our con-

versation, our actions These deficiencies we ought deeply to deplore. We may already have struggled against them. We ought to struggle against them still more.

Ought we not then as religious Instructors and Guides to re-dedicate ourselves to God, to live more strenuously for virtue, to exemplify in our conduct and actions, more of the Christian spirit. Ought we not to be ministers of the spirit rather than of the letter, not explaining precepts so much as exemplifying them? and ought not our conduct, though in a humble way, to be an epistle of Christ, known and read of all?

Herein consists the deep responsibility of a Minister's office. His labours are useless, except he live the Christian life. I, in common with my brethren, feel that my employment is holy, and, therefore, I glory in my work. It is a holy work to reclaim man from ignorance, vice, and misery, to quicken intellect, and the moral sense within our fellow creatures, to save them from the ruinous effects of worldly dissipation and vice; to strengthen within them every manly principle, to lead them to their truest happiness, both here and hereafter, to speak good words to them that will sustain them in life's trials, and comfort them in their dying hour. I say it is a noble office, and to him who aright understands and comprehends its spiritual import, it is the divinest office on earth. But then, attached to it there is a deep responsibility. The blood of souls is required at the minister's hand. He has entrusted to him the high office of being the ambassador of Christ, to explain the will of God to his brethren, and woe betide him, if through indolence, or vanity, or worldliness, he keeps any thing back. Nay, more, he is in solemn duty bound, as far as human weakness and frailty will permit him, to exemplify his teaching, to live his doctrine, and to lead others by his good works, to glorify his Father in heaven.

I hope this first and greatest of duties will never be forgotten by us, and if private prayer will do anything to lead us to the Divine life, by lifting our souls to heaven, this should not be forgotten, but earnestly and diligently practised. If sedulous self-examination and looking into our own heart will do anything towards the extinction in our nature of every evil or earth-born desire, this should

be regularly and daily engaged in. If probing our motives, and searching every hidden recess of our heart, to see if there be any evil way there, be of avail, this should receive due attention. If accepting the hints which nature, Providence, or grace continually throw out, be of any service, they should be joyfully received. Ought we not then, who minister in holy things, solemnly to resolve to re-dedicate ourselves to God, and to the duties of our calling, from the firm conviction that it will be life to our own spirits; and that only by being devotedly and pre-eminently virtuous and pious ourselves, can we lead or confirm others in the ways of righteousness, and godliness, and peace.

Then ministers ought to read, and study, and strive hard, as far as health and physical and mental strength will permit, that they may throw an interest and variety around their Sunday services; and whilst imparting warmth, give strength and knowledge likewise. This is particularly needed among Unitarians. It is too often the case that the people come for what they hear, rather than to bear their share in the offering of prayer and praise. They come to have their intellects instructed, rather than to have their consciences quickened; they come to be mentally regaled, rather than to be morally or religiously edified. This has been too much the tendency of our denomination; still, as it does exist, it is the part of a minister to meet the want, and throw as great interest and variety as possible about his Sabbath ministrations, keeping always the moral and spiritual life before him as his special aim. And now, in these periods of enlightenment, when cheap books are so widely distributed, and standard libraries within the reach of all in the larger towns, when information is brought to almost every man's door, it is particularly necessary that there should be an efficient and enlightened Ministry, and that the pulpit should be reclaimed from the anility that has too frequently characterized it, and become the utterance, as well of a manly intellect, as of a rational religion; of pious and benevolent feeling, and of high, holy, and spiritual aims.

(To be continued.)

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

Address to the Congregation assembling in Hanover Square Chapel, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, by the Rev. George Harris, on Sunday Morning and Evening, December 9, 1849.

MY CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,—

I have long thought it very desirable that there should be more frequent meetings for Praise, and Prayer, and Christian converse than those which the stated Religious Exercises of the SUNDAY afford. The great purposes of a Christian Church cannot be thoroughly accomplished by the assembling of ourselves together on one day of the week only. Right is it that those who are like-minded should meet often the one with the other, to commune together of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the truths, and privileges, and duties, which are the portion of the children of God. Wrong is it for any individual to neglect the gift that is in him. *All* should be anxious to bring the contribution of personal knowledge, zeal, experience, to the building up of each other, in the principles and practice of our most Holy Faith. Essential to the furtherance of the great aims of Christian union is heartfelt interest in *each other's* well-being. Strengthen, may every one, the hands of his brother. The means, and opportunities of so doing, of spreading Christian truth, of increasing mutual fellowship, and cherishing the spirit of unfeigned charity, may be elicited, in the free interchange of thought, the relation of byepast struggle in the attainment of Christian truth, and the *combination* of individual and isolated effort. Subjects of interest and value may be spoken upon; information sought and obtained, which cannot be evolved in the more formal services of the Christian Sanctuary. Apparent coldness would be removed, and Christian earnestness and warmth advanced. Comparative strangers to the principles and history of our Churches would gain the information they are seeking. Mutual conference would herald Christian purpose; and Christian purpose, cheered and animated, would go forth in united action.

I believe these to be wants which are felt among us, especially by those who have joined our Congregation from other denominations. Sure I am, they involve obligations which should be discharged. Our Tract and Missionary meetings, partook, somewhat, of the character of the religious association of which I am now speaking. These quarterly assemblings, being now to be held in other places, this channel of Christian converse, is, in a measure closed, so far at least as specially relating to this Christian Congregation. It is fitting we open another, and a more frequent. Knowing there are some, I would fain hope many, amongst you, who feel in relation to this subject as I do, I propose we shall hold what I would designate a *Christian Fellowship* meeting, on Wednesday evenings, in the Girls School Room, once a fortnight as a beginning. I have witnessed the beneficial effects of such Meetings, in the Societies, with which I have, in past years been connected; and I have, therefore, the more confidence, in suggesting them, for adoption, here.

The meeting might commence, at half past Seven o'clock. United praise, and prayer, be offered, addresses from one or several, be given; papers communicated, or passages read from Works of interest; the Scriptures illustrated; and all that can tend to excite Christian feeling, and religious union, promote the enlightenment of the understanding, and further moral and spiritual advancement, and effort, have their suitable attention, consideration, and regard. An hour, thus occupied, once a fortnight, cannot, I hope, but be profitable for doctrine, for mutual encouragement, for instruction in righteousness, and practical beneficence, and godliness.

On Wednesday evening next, at half past Seven o'clock, in the Girls School Room, I shall be happy to meet as many friends, female as well as male, as may deem the proposal deserving of their countenance, and approval, and support.

CHURCH OF ENGLANDISM.

No. I.

ITS CEREMONIES.

IN the very infancy of our race, perhaps, an imposing and ceremonial Religion was the very best that could be offered to the acceptance of men. Ignorant and semi-civilized people are children, in all but physical development; and, like children, are pleased and captivated by what appears vividly and agreeably to the senses. Hence statuary, pictures, richly adorned temples, a splendidly arrayed priesthood, pompous processions, mysterious or awful rites, altars, sacrifices, scattering of incense, must, almost of necessity, form a prominent and essential part of any system of worship, which is to act upon the minds or engage the affections of a comparatively barbarous age. Frequently dangerous, and often despicable, as these things are in themselves, yet they must be tolerated among a rude people, as the only mode of enticing them to a place, and engaging them in acts, by which they may acquire some few and simple truths respecting Deity, and Duty, and Responsibility, and Immortality.

The Most High himself once condescended, in this respect, to the infirmity of his creatures. The descendants of his servants, the Patriarchs, during their sojourn in Egypt, had been accustomed to one of the most magnificent rituals which ever prevailed in the heathen world; and Jehovah, when he brought them out of "the house of bondage" by the hand of Moses, lest they should regret the gorgeous observances they had known so long, and be enticed into Idolatry, because of the grandeur of its externals, gave them, in tenderness and mercy, a system into which rite and ceremony very largely entered. There were provided, for their as yet feeble judgments and still feebler consciences, burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and peace-offerings, with their appropriate victims; and feasts of the Passover, and of Pentecost, and of Tabernacles; and weekly Sabbaths, and Sabbatical years; and a Tabernacle, with golden cherubim, and golden candlesticks, and the richest hangings of various coloured linen; and a high priest and numerous ordinary priests, and levites also, each class with its pe-

cular dress, and having its peculiar duties. In a word, *Sense* was as much as possible appealed to, in order to reach, by the only open road, their minds and feelings.

But the Deity did not intend such a material, corporeal, carnal mode of worship, to last for ever; and, as preliminaries to the day of its complete abolition, He continually sent Prophets, one after another, to declare to his chosen people, that even the strictest observance of the very ceremonies which He himself had enjoined, was an abomination in his sight, when unaccompanied by acts of kindness towards their brethren; or when made the substitutes for personal purity and individual uprightness. All persons are familiar with the forcible denunciation by Isaiah, in his lviii ch. of the "fasts" of the Israelites, when they were attended by immoral or unkindly conduct; and the morally searching inquiry of Jehovah, by him, "Is not *this* the Fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, and to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" To the same effect he declares, in Hosea vi. 6, "For I desired mercy [acts of beneficence towards their neighbours,] and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings." Nor should the beautiful passage in Micah vi. 6-8 be forgotten, which shows how utterly valueless all *forms* of worship are, when weighed in the balance with a life of integrity, clemency, and humility:—"Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Thus, even while He gave them, first in their Tabernacle, and afterwards in their Temple service, a most imposing ritual, because their minds were too gross to comprehend heavenly things without such an aid, He, at the same time, or rather gradually as years rolled on, prepared them, by His prophets, for a day that was approaching, when they should be completely emancipated from the thralldom of

all mere external observances. That time of enfranchisement arrived, when Jesus of Nazareth proclaimed his Gospel to the world.

Two of the leading characteristics of Christianity are its simplicity and its spirituality. In it the Jewish distinctions of clean and unclean, holy and unholy, are completely abrogated. It recognises no peculiar sanctity as attached to any day, or season, or time, or place, or person, or observance. Its Author discountenanced the Judaical observance of the Sabbath, which some modern Pharisees are so anxious to restore, by selecting that day especially, on which to labour in his miracles of healing, on which to go to a great feast in the house of Matthew the publican, and on which to walk through the corn fields with his disciples. But it was in his conversation with the woman of Samaria, at Jacob's well near Sychar, that he uttered the memorable words, which, if properly observed, would have protected his religion for ever from the idle and pernicious pageantry of form and ceremonial. The Jews thought that prayer could only go up directly to the Creator, when it arose from their temple in Jerusalem; and the Samaritans were equally certain, that no devotion could be pleasing to the Supreme, which did not ascend from their holy house on mount Gerizim. In allusion to this, and also in reprobation of it, our Lord said, as recorded in John iv. 21, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain [*only*], nor yet at Jerusalem [*only*], worship the Father;" leaving her and his subsequent followers to infer, "but with equal acceptance, from every other spot of earth, where pure and pious hearts are assembled." Still more emphatically does he add, in the 24th verse, "God is a spirit; and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Paul seems to have been the first of the apostles, who saw clearly the full force and efficacy of these remarkable words, and who deduced from them the great practical truth, that in Christian acts of devotion, form is nothing, and the spirit, the disposition, the state of the heart, every thing. He saw, moreover, that this truth was a great part of our Gospel franchises, a leading and most valuable enactment in the Gospel *Magna Charta*, a chief and important element of our Gospel

liberty. He is, therefore, not merely content with allowing perfect freedom of conscience among his converts, as to whether they will observe or neglect certain times and seasons; saying to the Romans, (xiv. 5) "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike; let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;" but goes even further, saying to the Colossians (iii. 16,) "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holiday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath." Nay, he assumes a more decided tone still, and positively *censures* the Galatians for their attention to such puerilities, upbraiding them with a wish to revert to Judaical practices. Thus he writes in chap. iv. 9, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you labour in vain."

Such then was Christianity in the first ages, pure and spiritual; no vain forms, no idle ceremonies, no pompous observances, no ostentatious devotions; and so it must, to a great extent, have continued, till that unfortunate hour, early in the fourth century, when Constantine took the Church of Christ under his protection, and allied with the State the religion of him, who said "My kingdom is not of this world." As the Clergy, from being followers of the fishermen of Galilee, became the associates of nobles, and the frequenters of courts, and increased in wealth and dignity, the public worship they conducted was deprived of its simplicity, and adapted to their altered fortunes. Rite after rite, form after form, ceremony after ceremony, observance after observance, holy-days, and saint's-days, and fast-days, and festival-days, and rich robes, and various coloured garments, and altars, and pictures, and statues, and crucifixes, and relics, (some imitated from the Mosaic religion, and others adopted from the pagans whom they converted to Christianity,) were gradually added; till, at last, Christian devotions attained the intricacy and sensuousness, which prevailed under the Roman Pontiffs in their palmyest days; so that if Paul had risen from the dead, he might have thought

the Galatians themselves primitive and spiritual in the comparison.

At length, early in the sixteenth century, Luther seized the trump of Reformation, which had been sounded by England's Wickliffe a hundred and fifty years before, and blew upon it a blast, which shook from the walls many of the foul and ensnaring adornments, which disfigured the originally fair edifice of genuine Christianity. Not only the most obnoxious doctrines, but many of the Mosaic or *Heathen Rites* fostered by Popery, were then cast aside, as "weak and beggarly elements;" and, among the Continental Protestants generally, a system of worship was established, as simple as that which now usually obtains among English Dissenters. In this kingdom, it was unfortunately otherwise. Henry VIII was half a Romanist himself, and his daughter Elizabeth, in whose reign our National Church was modelled much as we now behold it, possessed similar tendencies, and was moreover fond both as a woman and a queen, of show and glitter. The result was, that Religion in England was only half reformed; and especially that some of the offensive ceremonies of Popery were still retained. This gave the Puritans excessive pain, and caused them great distress. They unaffectedly desired, at that period, to be comprehended within the pale of the Establishment; they agreed with its authorities in most, if not all important points of doctrine; but their entrance into the fold was effectually prevented, by the existence there of that "leaven," of which their consciences told them to "beware." Hundreds, thousands, myriads, of moral and pious men, of persons peculiarly sensitive on all points of duty, prayed and entreated that the obstacles to their union with the State Religion might be removed; but the governmental authorities, and the government priests were so blind to their own true interests, that they preferred retaining some worn out form, to securing such numerous and powerful adherents. Dissenters of this age have reason to bless God that it was so; for had those in high places yielded, Christianity might have been bound to the Temporal Power, by cords, almost impossible to rend asunder.

R. E. B. M.

THE ONE UNIVERSAL, SALVATION,
UPRIGHTNESS BEFORE GOD.

It is often said, that there is only *one* way of salvation. I firmly believe it. There is nothing in the whole world of which I am so fully convinced. There is only one way of salvation. But, happily, it is a most liberal way, and one that may be pursued by all the dwellers upon the face of the earth. It is simply that of *uprightness before God*. That is, a sincere desire to know the will of God, to obey it faithfully in singleness of eye as unto him, and not unto men; and always to do those things that are right and pleasing in his sight; according to the light and ability, the opportunities and advantages, or the means of grace which he has graciously given to his rational creatures, in this probationary state of being. This is the *one*, the *only* everlasting salvation. But, as I have said before, it is the one universal salvation. And a little consideration will suffice to shew how well it is founded in truth, how reasonable it is in itself, and how happy it is in its influence upon mankind.

God, the universal Father, must require uprightness in his children in all their relations towards him, and intercourse with him. He must look for it as the first step in their duty towards him, and the indispensable condition of his blessing and favour. From his own perfect rectitude he must naturally look for it before all other things, and as naturally prize it above all price. This only can harmonize with him; and as it must do so most completely, it must be the object of his highest complacency and love. It is his own spirit; and as it is thus one with him, it hence receives the highest exaltation and glory that Divine goodness can bestow.

This must be evident from the feelings and conduct of men themselves. Let us consider a man of great uprightness of character. Does he not admire and love uprightness wherever he sees it? Can he admire and love anything else? Can anything else accord with him? Can anything else excite his sympathy, call forth his esteem, and secure his attachment? Certainly nothing else can. Strictly upright himself, nothing but uprightness in others can obtain his approbation and esteem. Nothing but that can lead him to form a pure and lasting friendship.

Nothing else can cement between himself and the object of his regard an indissoluble union. From the great power which it exercises over them, they are of one heart and one mind, and not even death itself can sever the pleasing bond. It extends beyond the grave, and endures for ever. We see innumerable illustrations of this nature every day of our lives. And if frail human creatures esteem uprightness of so great importance, must not an infinitely perfect Being regard it as of inestimable price? For his ways and thoughts are as much above our ways and thoughts, as the heavens are higher than the earth. And therefore he must have, above all human creatures, the most exalted sense of moral beauty and goodness.

Thus, the Divine Being, from his own nature, must look for uprightness in his creatures as the first qualification to obtain his favour and blessing. He must admire and love it, as that which is truly good and amiable in his sight. It must live in his special presence. It must be closely united to him for ever, so that nothing can separate it from him. This must be evident to all who believe that God is a perfectly good Being. For as sure as he is perfect rectitude, so sure must he love rectitude in his creatures, and with his highest love.

On the other hand must he not regard insincerity or hypocrisy with his highest displeasure? Is it not so regarded by every truly upright man? And must it not be so by the God of truth? Is it not a fact, too, that hypocrisy destroys all esteem and love, severs all the ties of attachment, puts an end to friendship, and separates those that were once friends as wide asunder as the poles? How, then, must it separate man from God? It is directly at variance with all his brighter moral perfections; and it must, therefore, be totally cut off from Him, and excluded from his holy presence. Take it only in regard to love. Does it not utterly destroy love? or create in love an utter revulsion and aversion? How entirely, therefore, must it be cut off from the Divine Being, and all communication with him. For he is the God of love; and "he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." Thus, while uprightness always dwells in the holy place, the tabernacle of the Most High; hypocrisy, from

its very nature, is wholly separated from God, from his holy communion, and divine presence.

Hence the solemn declaration of Scripture, that "The hope of the hypocrite shall perish." And it is remarkable that the strongest denunciations ever uttered by Jesus Christ were directed to the Pharisees, for their great hypocrisy. This filled him with the most holy, yet, at the same time, the most terrible indignation, that the Moral Reformer ever inflicted on hardened iniquity. While towards all other species of human frailty, he ever showed the greatest tenderness and compassion. Publicans and the infamous would enter the kingdom of heaven, sooner than those specious professors, who appeared outwardly righteous unto men, but were within full of hypocrisy and iniquity. He sought to save sinners, contrite sinners; and to these his mercy was ever ready, ever gracious, and full. But as for men of fair profession, great pretensions, and high-sounding zeal, with nothing but hollow-heartedness, what remained for them but woe? How could they escape the damnation of hell? So strongly, but in a different form, did Jesus reiterate the declaration of Scripture, that "The hope of the hypocrite shall perish."

When we are forbidden to take the name of God in vain, and are assured that the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain, what are we taught but that truth and sincerity are indispensable to acceptable worship, in our addresses to Almighty God? This sincere spirit is pure devotion, well pleasing in his sight; while that which is mere form and lip-worship is mockery before him, and abomination in his sight.

"Walk before me," said Jehovah to Abraham, "and be thou perfect," (Gen. xvii. 1). That is, Walk before me, and be thou *upright*. For the words *perfect* and an *upright* are used in various places in the Scriptures, to express the *same* thing. Thus Job was "a *perfect* and an *upright* man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil," (Job i. 8). Thus also the Psalmist says, "Mark the *perfect* man, and behold the *upright* : for the end of that man is peace," (Ps. xxxvii. 37). In both these cases, the *perfect* man is the *upright* man; and, consequently, he who is *upright* is *perfect*. Let the reader remember this: *Uprightness* is *Perfectness*. How pleasing, then,

is uprightness in the sight of God ! Moral perfection is regarded by him as identified with it ; as, in fact, the *same* thing. What more can be said in its praise ? This the Scripture testifies of it, yea, the God of truth himself. And who shall not say, after this, that it is man's first concern and highest interest ? If he is right here, he is right everywhere. If he is here wrong, he must be everywhere wrong. Error, with uprightness, is innocent ; while even truth, with insincerity, is guilt. A true heart will atone for a mistaken faith ; while a false heart will render a true faith a greater aggravation of disobedience and sin. A true heart, with an erroneous faith, is perfect safety ; while a false heart, with a true faith, is the greatest of all dangers.

In other parts of the Scriptures we read, that " God desireth truth in the inward parts ;" and that " he trieth the heart, and hath pleasure in uprightness," (Ps. li. 6, 1 Chron. xxix. 17). The great Searcher of the heart looks for this uprightness in the inmost recesses of it ; and if He finds it there, it is well pleasing to him, " he hath *pleasure* in it." What can more strongly recommend it to us ? God, our Father, regards it as the highest excellence, and it receives his warmest approbation and love.

Hence the Scriptures can give no higher title to a good man than that he is *just*. " He is a just man." And in the finest figure that can be presented to us, it is said, that his " path is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Our Saviour has taught us to serve God with a " pure heart," (Matt. v. 8). That is, a heart influenced by pure, sincere motives ; what he elsewhere calls " an honest and good heart" (Luke viii. 15), which must be the same as a truly upright heart. So that Jesus Christ here teaches us uprightness. And he teaches us, moreover, that this is salvation ; for he tells us plainly that by this we are enabled to " see God," to perceive him clearly by the light of the understanding, brought more immediately into communion with him, into his holy presence, into his light, and glory, and bliss ; and he assures us that we are thus "*blessed*." How can we fail to be " blessed" when dwelling in that presence which is all

purity, and love, all light, and peace, and joy? This is the distinguished privilege of uprightness, and its felicitous state. "Blessed are the pure in heart," the upright, "for they shall see God."

Jesus tells us further, that "true worship" is not merely that which is addressed to the Father, but that which is addressed to Him "in spirit and in truth," (John iv. 23). That is, in the spirit of sincerity, in the inward mind. And he assures us, besides, in the same verse, that "the Father seeketh such to worship him." The Father looks for this sincere spirit of devotion in all that approach Him; and the words evidently imply that he is pleased with it, and graciously accepts and blesses it.

Our Lord spoke of one who was "an Israelite indeed," because there was in him "no guile," (John i. 47). It was persons of this ingenuousness of disposition whom he designated "babes;" and it was in consequence of this spirit of sincerity and simplicity that the Father had revealed to them especially, the grand truths of the Gospel. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight," (Matt. xi. 25, 26). Thus it is good in the sight of the Father, to withhold spiritual things from "the worldly wise, those wise in their own conceits," and bestow them on persons of "innocent and docile dispositions."

Yet "God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him," (Acts x. 34, 35). That is, every one that doeth that which is right, or that walketh uprightly before him, is accepted with him. In the same spirit, it is added in another place, "For when the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another," (Rom. ii. 14, 15). Here the Gentiles are to act according to the light that is in them, or their conscience; and according as they obey that law, or do what is right, as it shall dictate to them, they will be accepted.

It is doing, and not merely believing, that is the ground of acceptance; and that doing is righteousness, or uprightness, aided by the light which is within them, and without them, and which, in their peculiar circumstances, is to be their guide.

And thus the Scriptures teach us, that uprightness before God is, of all other things, the most pleasing to Him, and has the promise of his choicest blessings. It has clearly his approbation and love, his highest approbation and love. He loves it as the purest goodness, the most amiable disposition, the highest excellence. It dwells in his presence, in that presence which is light and love, fulness of joy, and pleasures for ever more. It is admitted into his more immediate communion; and from its own spirit it is one with him, and is thus made perfect in one. How exalted is its privilege! How felicitous its lot!

(To be concluded in our next No.)

RETROSPECT OF THE YEAR 1849.

PART I.

THE close of the Old and the advent of the New Year, is a period of mingled regret and expectation; of regret for the many opportunities of moral and intellectual improvement which we have permitted to pass all profitless away; and of expectation, arising from a feeling intimately connected with our natures, the ever undefined hope of something brighter and better than the Past, which futurity has in store for us.

But it is this regret for that which is gone, this expectation of that which is to come, which if rightly directed is not without its beneficial influence. Not the least beneficial will be its tendency to wean us from the Present, and in some instances from ourselves, and to induce us to take a wider and more comprehensive view of humanity, and the wants and requirements of our own spiritual natures.

As in the Physical World, the landscape behind us softens as it recedes, so imagination invests the Past with a thousand ideal beauties; and the far distance, like the recollections of our childhood and our youth, seems to

sink in the horizon as the glimpses of some bright and happy land, passed away for ever ! The Future too has equal charms, and as the scenery of an unknown country ever rises before the traveller with some new expectation of adventure and discovery ; so the ideal Prospect before us, is not without its hopefulness and wonder, to cheer us on through the rough ways of life's eventful progress.

Our present Retrospect, however, is with the past year alone. Eighteen-hundred-and-forty-nine has gone down chequered with the usual aspects of evil and of good. Momentarily in the Political world, the storm has rolled aside, but heavy clouds brood in the distance, and the thunder yet unspent throbs threateningly from the horizon. On the Continent there is no guarantee of permanent security ; the political atmosphere may become suddenly overcast, for the great war of Opinion has not been yet fought out, not even for the present generation, and the pause of the combatants is but an ominous breathing time which may lead to a renewed and fiercer struggle.

In France we may consider the present calm more as the effects of exhaustion than of any satisfaction experienced at the state of things. An enslaved Press, a military surveillance, the prostration of the Right of political discussion, an Autocracy in the person of the President, almost as absolute as that represented by Nicholas of Russia himself, are not exactly such fruits as the advocates of liberal opinions, and all constitutional lovers of their country would look for, after fifty years of Revolutions and of Battles, if not in the cause, at least in the *name* of the Rights of Man !

The Republic of 1848, the "impromptu," of Lamartine and of Albert, the Poet and the Workman ; after a few desperate throes in which it vainly endeavoured to reconcile the discordant principles which gave it birth, repudiated with vindictive scorn its Parents, and casting itself and its destinies for a time at the feet of a successful Soldier, finally consummated the sum of political inconsistencies and contradictions, by falling down and worshipping a Phantom and a Name, whose head,

"The likeness of a Kingly crown had on."

It was in 1849, also, under Louis Napoleon, that a

government founded on the one only principle of the will and sovereignty of the people, made its first hostile essay against an infant Republic, similarly circumstanced as itself, or pleading even a sterner necessity for liberation from a priestly tyranny of centuries!

Truly, it was a strange anomaly to see France, as in the summer of the Past year, forcing back the Pope and his Camarillæ, a spiritual Potentate upon a Republican people, at the point of the bayonet! And while this notable exploit was performing, with the exception of the ill-digested and worse executed "emeute" of Ledru Rollin and his colleagues, France was comparatively passive. The truth is, whether from constitutional levity, or from a certain inaptitude to apply great principles, Liberty itself has ever been, with her, more an abstraction than a reality, more a name, a formula, a thing of conventional meaning, a shibboleth shouted by her Philosophers and echoed back by her Poets, a chorus chaunted by her ballad singers and bandied by her mob, to pile barricades, and to plant trees withal, than a living and inspiring reality, warming the hearts of her citizens, and prompting them to the exercise of great and noble actions.

Fame, military prowess, and an ardent love of the magnificent, have been the idols France has worshipped, at least from the day when the daring Corsican first stepped upon her soil and seized upon power and empire. The splendour of his career dazzled the world but for a brief period; but in France he left behind him a name and an influence, which, whether derived from the gigantic energies of the man, or the strange change of his fortunes, and the desolation of his fate on the rock in the lone sea, bequeathed a spell in every connection with his memory, which, whenever roused, is sufficient to shake France to her centre with a moral and political tempest, of all exciting thoughts, of ambition, and aggrandisement.

At present she is comparatively tranquil. The chief actors of her most recent revolutions are disgraced, or exiled, or forgotten. All hitherto contending parties seem temporarily to have united to preserve "order" at any cost. That this state of things will long continue is extremely doubtful. Republicans, Bonapartists, and Royalists are more probably keenly watching each other's

movements; and, none liking to make the first display, trust rather for success to some false move on the part of their opponents, than to any overt actions of their own.

Rome, in 1849, exhibited an object of deep interest. There was something in her day dream of Liberty, for it scarcely lasted longer, that recalled the days of Rienzi, and of those stern Tribunes in an earlier period of her history, who contended with such varying result against Patrician power and Aristocratic domination.

It was, perhaps, all too soon, her moral resurrection, or at least her leaders promulgated too extensive a measure of Freedom for her priest ridden and uneducated population. To be free and rightly to appreciate freedom, requires years of instruction, of trial, and of sacrifice. Perhaps even in our own land, much as some of us desire the renovation of certain institutions, and the abolition of others, the great masses of the people are hardly yet prepared for organic changes, and the faithful performance of the duties those changes would entail. The day, when human liberty shall be widely extended, and every barrier of religious or political exclusion be thrown down, is coming, and must come; but the more successful will be its advance and the less chance of any reaction will there be, if it proceed step by step with the moral and intellectual culture of the people.

In reference to Italy, though in her darkest times she produced more great and noble spirits, it may be fairly doubted whether a state passing by a sudden transition from the grossest spiritual domination to a system of Elective Government, of Universal Suffrage, and an Unrestricted Press, was not too bold a trial for modern Roman virtue and Italian notions of self-denial.

Mazzini, however, might have effected much for liberty had he been allowed time to develope his plans, and to consolidate the new constitution. Glory to the few brave spirits who contended, though unsuccessfully! and deep and lasting disgrace upon France, and Austria, and Naples, for their aggressive tyranny, their union in wrong. The attempt to free the Italian peoples has not been made in vain, however, it has taught a lesson both to Rome and to her conquerors. With the one shall remain a moral and an example not promptly to be obliterated.

ted ; with the others, a reputation the world would willingly repudiate, and themselves hereafter most ardently wish to be forgotten.

Yet the attempt, we repeat, like every struggle for a people's emancipation, has not been fruitless. Great thoughts and principles survive the passing contests of the day and make unwilling converts of the conquerors themselves. Nay, even the fall of that wild and daring Garibaldi, shall not be without its influence, and the name of the free soldier of fortune, who kept France at bay for weeks before the crumbling walls of Rome, shall give a dash of sublimity to his genius and audacity, and the cause for which he strove, which shall make him the hero of many a wild song among the Appenines, and many a tale among the Italian peasantry, to stir deep the thoughts of future generations.

Sicily, Milan, Florence, Modena, Venice, all witnessed in 1849 the overthrow of their expectations of national independence. Sardinia, and her Italian dependencies, Genoa and Piedmont, still retain the form of a constitutional Government. Their unfortunate King, Charles Albert, in his fall and death, severely atoned for the rashness of his second attack upon Austria, if he were not altogether the creature of circumstance, urged on by the intemperate factions of his continental dominions. The sentence once pronounced against him has become considerably mollified, and posterity in reviewing his character will acknowledge the many redeeming points which palliate his errors, and confess that even his frailties were better than the virtues of a host of Legitimates, who ruling from time immemorial upon the mere tenure of their "right divine," never entertained one noble thought or emanated one generous action for the happiness and prosperity of the human race.

But to Hungary, during the past year, our liveliest sympathies were directed. The names of her defenders, and of Kossuth above them all, rose suddenly upon the gaze of Europe ; and as Austria, foiled by this man's genius, invoked in her ruinous retreat the aid of Russia, and the Autocrat poured his Cossacks and wild serfs through the mountain passes upon Hungary, the contest assumed an interest which could alone be com-

pared with that concentrated around Warsaw, in 1830, when Poland made her last stand for freedom and nationality, and foiled for a time Diebitsch himself, and "the Lions of Varna," the so-called heroes of the Turkish war. But in vain were all our hopes. Overwhelming numbers and domestic treachery, stimulated perhaps by Russian gold, determined in brief time the contest. Kossuth, Bem, Dembinski, Bathvani, and Georgey, will live in history, the first assuredly among the Höfers and Koskiuskös, the last in that black list of traitors, in which it were better to have never lived at all, than to have been once inserted.

Bathvani's death, the cold and deliberate murder of the mangled prisoner, was comparable alone to the ferocious deeds of the Kirks and Claverhouses of the worst days of English history. Haynau, the Austrian General, is a fit companion for him of the "Bloody assizes," Jeffreys; and the flogging of women as a corrective of political heresies, is an expedient which may prove not more efficacious than the burnings and brandings of old time, upon culprits accused of entertaining certain religious extravagances of opinion.

But in Hungary, the contest is not yet closed. There may be a calm, but it is the repose of desolation. The name of Kossuth yet lives in the hearts of thousands, in the woods and wilds of the land of the Magyar, and will be a watchword and a spell at the appointed time to resuscitate the hopes and energies of a prostrated but not a conquered nation. Nay, the Russian serf will himself learn something from the example of the people he overcame, and as Pyrrhus of old exclaimed, when he had obtained a temporary triumph over Roman valour, Nicholas himself may repeat, "Another such victory and I am lost!" Truly, the Russian Bear, however fierce and loud his howl at Turkey, when he snuffed the blood of the Refugees, and demanded their lives, retreated somewhat precipitately to his iceberg in the north, at the first growl of the British Lion. There let him lick his paws, and reflect somewhat more considerately ere he meditate a fresh irruption upon the liberties of mankind.

Prussia, Baden, Saxony, and other German States, have all more or less afforded examples of the fluctua-

tions of political opinion during the past year. The recent acquittal of Waldeck in Prussia, is a significant hint to William Frederick that his people at least have appreciated too thoroughly the blessings of constitutional freedom, not to value deeply its benefits, nor in any subsequent fit of reactionary loyalty to surrender the liberty of the Press, trial by Jury, and Representative Government, to his caprice or to his dogmatic will. On the whole, then, we may rejoice in reference to Europe, that certain great principles, if not fully maintained, have at least been better understood, and that out of the struggles, trials, revolutions, and reactionary movements, of the past year, a fairer order will arise, till that day shall come when with commerce unrestricted, and education universal, the last links shall be struck from the limbs of the slave, and the common rights of humanity be acknowledged throughout the world.

Canterbury.

J. B.

THE USE AND ABUSE OF THE TRINITY.

A STATEMENT has appeared in the Newspapers, that in the Insolvent Debtors' Court, London, December 10, an Insolvent, an Italian by birth, was opposed by one of his fellow countrymen. After the former was sworn by the Usher of the Court, the Creditor said he was convinced that the Insolvent would pay no regard to the oath, as administered. In Italy "persons were sworn by the Holy Trinity, and holding up three of their fingers." Mr. Commissioner Phillips thought the Insolvent should be sworn as in his own Country. The Insolvent was then sworn, the Creditor repeating the oath, "in the name of the Trinity, holding up three of his fingers." Mr. Commissioner Phillips, seeing that the Holy Gospels were not given to the Insolvent, asked the Creditor, whether they dispensed with the Testament? The Creditor answered in the affirmative.

What a pitiable exhibition is this of ignorance, superstition, and folly. Was the substituted oath legal in an English Court? How simple the question of the Commissioner, "whether they dispensed with the Testament?" Of course they did. The New Testament knows nothing

of the Trinity, nor is the Trinity part and parcel of the New Testament. It is the doctrine of tradition and of the assumed infallible Church, not of the Bible. That authority set aside and dispensed with the Testament when it enacted belief in the Trinity, and made that belief an indispensable condition to salvation; and consistent was it, therefore, that the doctrine thus ordained should put the Testament out of Court. How irreverent must be men's thoughts respecting this doctrine which they profess to believe, when holding up "three of their fingers," is conceived to typify it, and sanctify the oath. Strange way to deepen men's attachment to the Scriptures to dispense with their use in a Protestant Court, on the suggestion of persons professing to be Christians. Would similar deference to supposed conscientious scruple have been shown to an Insolvent who questioned the Scripturality of oath-taking, but expressed willingness to give *affirmation* to the truth of statements to be exhibited? We fear not. Superstition may have homage done it, but not God-fearing simplicity.

REVIEW.

The Salt of the Earth; a Sermon by J. Scott Porter. London : E. T. Whitfield.

THIS Sermon was preached at the Anniversary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, in Essex Street Chapel, London, May 30, 1849, by the junior Minister of the First Presbyterian Congregation, Belfast. It is worthy of the time, the occasion, the objects of the Society before whose Members and Friends it was preached. After explaining the Scriptural significance of the text, Matthew v. 13, Mr. Porter applies it to those "who stand up before their brethren in the attitude of Religious Reformers. Men who feel themselves called upon to record a public protest against what they regard as prevalent error, and to offer to their brethren's acceptance what they consider a purer faith, and a more sanctifying rule of life, than those which are put forth by other Churches, are, in their own conception at least, placed in circumstances very closely corresponding to those of the persons addressed in the text." Obstacles to the diffusion of

Christian truth may arise from "the ungodly lives" of those who profess it, "from their want of zeal, or from their improper manner of advocating their views." The Preacher having depicted the moral and spiritual power of holy and godly living, of a conscientious, upright, and benevolent conversation, on the part of those professing to uphold Scriptural truth, even on gainsayers, puts in faithful and searching terms the converse, showing that if Unitarians are not thus characterized they merit not success, and that, if unholy tempers and actions be the genuine fruits of their doctrines, those doctrines ought to perish.

On the obstacle arising from lack of Christian zeal, Mr. Porter's observations are excellent. He points out clearly the mistake of those who are for sinking "the express promulgation of the Unitarian doctrine," and who vainly imagine that by so doing the world will be more surely redeemed from religious error. By those who would devote their time and attention wholly to moral and political reforms, conceiving that by so doing religious truth would make more rapid progress, these questions should be carefully weighed. "What man of independent mind would consent to take a part in labours, even for the most important plans of social improvement ever yet proposed, whether on behalf of temperance, education, slave emancipation, or for whatever other end, on the degrading condition of renouncing all zeal for what he holds to be Religious Truth, and even discarding the simple adoption of its name? And how can any reasonable man lead himself to imagine that by so doing he takes a sure way to advance its progress?"

"Not such aid, not such defenders, do the present times demand. All around is life, activity, earnest enterprise. He must have looked with a superficial glance on society as it now presents itself, who cannot see that this is no time for timidity, lukewarmness, supineness. Most hearty and energetic are the efforts now in progress among our fellow-christians for bringing the knowledge and the influence of the principles which they hold, home to the mind and the heart of every member of the community, if it be possible. Let us, while we cordially admire and approve the zeal by which they are actuated, take pattern from their conduct, and imitate their good example."

"When all are competing in a race, he who will not exert himself is thrown behind, distanced by those with whom he was

formerly on a par. There is nothing for us now but life, energy, activity. If we fold our hands and compose ourselves to slumber, we sleep the sleep of death. Relax our zeal, and our salt be comes utterly savourless, useless, good for nothing."

The right spirit in advocacy of Christian truth is then delineated, and the negative form of its maintenance condemned as erroneous and evil. Preached in its simplicity and godliness, with earnestness, moral and spiritual unction, it will prove, as of yore, the savour of life unto life.

REGISTER; RELIGIOUS AND PHILANTHROPIC.
JANUARY 1, 1850.

NEWCASTLE AND NORTH OF ENGLAND UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN TRACT AND MISSIONARY SOCIETY.—The Sixteenth Quarterly Meeting was held at Sunderland, on Sunday and Monday, December 2 and 3, 1849. The weather was very unfavourable for large attendance, nevertheless there were friends present from Newcastle, Gateshead, North Shields, Chirton, South Shields, &c. The religious services on Sunday were conducted, both morning and evening, by Mr. George Close of West Witton, Wensleydale, who illustrated in his discourses very powerfully and beautifully the principle of Christian Love. Collections were made in aid of the Association. The audiences, comprising several strangers, listened with gratified attention.

On Monday afternoon, December 3, the members and friends met at Tea in the Room under the Chapel in Bridge Street. More than Seventy persons, male and female, were present, the Rev. George Harris in the chair. The Chairman invoked the Divine Blessing before the social repast. At its conclusion an adjournment took place to the Chapel, when Mr. Harris gave out a hymn of thanksgiving, which was sung by the company.

The Minutes of the Fifteenth Quarterly Meeting, held at Barnard Castle and Catterick were read by the Chairman, with the subsequent proceedings of the Committee and Society. On the motion of the Rev. John Wright of Sunderland, seconded by Mr. W. Braithwaite, and supported by Mr. W. Chapman of the same Town, it was unanimously resolved "That the Minutes and subsequent proceedings be adopted and confirmed."

The Meeting was then addressed by the Chairman on the principles and objects of the Association, and Mr. Harrison of Sunderland spoke on the same subjects energetically and excel-

lently. Mr. Close's welcome to the Association was given by the Chairman, with thanks for his services, and God speed to his Christian labours. Mr. Close responded, dwelling on the power and blessedness of Scriptural Christianity, and giving details of its preaching at Arkindale, Gilling, Preston and Bolton Castle, Yorkshire, of great interest and importance. The Chairman in proposing the Sunderland Congregation and its Preachers, bore testimony to the unwearied and successful labours of the Rev. John Wright when stationed years ago at Alnwick, and his gratuitous efforts to uphold the cause of Divine truth, and Public Social Worship, in Christian simplicity and truth, in Sunderland. Mr. Wright replied with earnestness and feeling, giving several valuable hints as to the best modes of aiding the Missionary effort, and proposed the other Congregations and friends in the District, with the hope of greater union and co-operation of effort among their respective members. Mr. James Simpson of Chirton, having been called on, made a few judicious remarks on Temperance as a very needful moral reformation, and sang a Temperance song, illustrative of the kindly and Christian spirit in which that reform should be conducted. The Chairman proposed Missionary effort as embodying the spirit of Christ, with hope and prayer for its permanent and extended Agency in this District. Mr. Simpson of Chirton spoke in similar spirit and desire. Mr. Mason of Sunderland in moving Success to Mr. Harris' labours, bore testimony to the value and blessedness of Christian truth, and the Rev. John Wright in seconding the Resolution, made request on the part of the meeting that Mr. Harris would resume Monthly evening lectures on week nights in Sunderland. Mr. Harris assented, thanked the friends, resigning the chair to Mr. Wright, as the hour for Railway had arrived, and bade Farewell to the meeting.

Subsequently, Mr. William Chapman spoke on the Education of the People. A cordial vote of thanks to the Ladies for their attention and arrangements at the Tea meeting was given, on the motion of Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Braithwaite, and the meeting closed with singing and prayer.

HANOVER SQUARE CHAPEL, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE SUNDAY SCHOOL.—A special meeting of the Teachers of the Sunday School for Boys, was convened on Sunday, December 9, 1849, and held in the Vestry, at the close of the forenoon worship.

The Rev. George Harris, presided. Mr. William Kay, the indefatigable Secretary to the Schools for the last three years, gave in his resignation in consequence of being about to emigrate to Australia. The announcement took many of the Teachers by surprise, and all felt unfeigned sorrow at the change. After Mr. Harris and others had spoken in expression of their sentiments and feelings, the following Resolution, suggested by the Chairman, was proposed by Mr. Francis Burden, seconded by Mr. Lyddell Peverley, and cordially and unanimously adopted :

“That the Teachers receive with sincere regret the notice of the resignation of the respected Secretary to the Hanover Square Chapel Sunday Schools ; that that regret is deepened by the knowledge of his consequent removal to another part of the world, which has occasioned his resignation, thereby depriving them of his future co-operation in their efforts ; that they gladly embrace this opportunity of bearing testimony to the untiring zeal, earnestness and fidelity with which he has discharged the duties of the office he has now resigned ; of expressing their esteem and respect for his personal character and talents, and their confident hope and belief that wherever the Providence of God may guide him, he will be found in the future, as in the past, labouring for the improvement and happiness of his fellow creatures, and more especially of the young.

“The heartfelt good wishes and prayers of the Teachers accompany their Friend and Coadjutor in his removal to Australia.”

Mr. Kay acknowledged the Resolution in an admirable Address, full of excellent and valuable thoughts as to the duty and privilege of Sunday School teaching, and urging on his hearers continuance in the good work, steadfastness in its prosecution, and care in preparation for the faithful performance of its labours.

HANOVER SQUARE CHAPEL, NEWCASTLE, CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP MEETING. — The Christian Fellowship Association suggested, in the address inserted page 25, assembled on the evening indicated, Wednesday, December 12, in the Girls School-room. It was crowded. A most auspicious commencement was made. With truth it may be affirmed, that those who came together on that evening were of one heart and one mind in reference to it. The meeting began with praise and prayer, the hymn being given out by Mr. Harris, and the prayer offered by him at the throne of Grace and Wisdom. He then spoke on the purposes

to be aimed at in such meetings, the means of their attainment, and the spirit which should actuate and pervade them, enforcing his remarks by pertinent quotations on the objects of a Christian Church from a recent number of the Prospective Review. Some of the practical benefits he illustrated by the happy results which similar meetings, held years since in Edinburgh and in Glasgow, had been instrumental in accomplishing. Mr. James Clephan of Gateshead, Dr. Hayle and Mr. Peverley of Newcastle, expressed their cordial concurrence in the aims suggested, their approval of the meeting, their hope and belief in its utility and desirableness, their remarks at once stamping the truthfulness of that belief and hope by the impulsive Christian instruction and benevolent feeling they imparted and called forth.

Mr. Harris said a Friend was to leave them that evening, at the close of this their first Fellowship Meeting, who had been indefatigable in their Schools. The Teachers had on Sunday on receiving his resignation of the Secretaryship, passed a unanimous Resolution in reference to him, and they, with a few other friends, availed themselves of this night's meeting to present Mr. William Kay with a few Volumes as a remembrance of their Christian regard. He himself, as the Superintendant of the Schools, and the Pastor of the Congregation, wished to add two Volumes of his own Sermons and Tracts, as a parting token of sincere good will and friendly interest in his welfare and happiness. He hoped every blessing would accompany him, and that he, with others of their Society who had recently departed to the same quarter of the world, with others like-minded already settled there, would strengthen each other's hands in building up in Australia a Christian church in which the One universal Father would be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

Mr. William Kay replied most feelingly, uttering thoughts which could not fail of benefitting those who heard them, and of inducing firmer resolve and more strenuous effort in all well-doing. Mr. Harris then closed the meeting with Prayer and Benediction.

LIFE BOAT DISASTER OFF SOUTH SHIELDS.—This very painful and fatal occurrence by which Twenty Pilots were drowned in their attempt to save a Ship in danger amidst a heavy and tempestuous sea, has naturally excited general public sympathy for their widows and orphan families. No fewer than seventeen Widows and forty seven children were left to mourn the loss of

husbands and Parents, swept in an instant to their death in their brave and heroic struggle to preserve the lives of others. Sharing in the public sympathy, the Committee of Hanover Square Chapel, Newcastle-on-Tyne, appointed a Collection to be made on Sunday, December 16. 1849. In the morning the Rev. George Harris preached, with special reference to the circumstances, from Psalm xcv. 3-5, and Revelation xx. 13; and in the evening from John i. 1., the previously announced Lecture of a Course. Collections £23. 4s. 6.

OBITUARY.—At Villa Real, in the vicinity of Newcastle-on-Tyne, November 18, 1849, aged 81, Russell Blackbird, Esq. In the personal experience of this respected individual, another instance was exemplified of patient industry and moral probity, conducting to the acquisition of worldly competence. In early youth apprenticed to Mr. William Robson, a Shipbuilder and Merchant of this Town, the apprentice attracted the notice of his Employer by his attendance on the religious meetings in which he himself took a deep and lively interest. Mr. Robson, educated amongst the Calvinistic Baptist denomination, could not stifle the questionings which the plain statements of the Scriptures excited in antagonism to his denominational belief. Those questionings leading to conviction in his mind that Calvinism was corruption of Gospel purity, he left the Society in Tuthill Stairs, Newcastle, of which he had been a member, and with others founded a Unitarian Baptist Congregation in Pandon Bank. Zealous in the dissemination of his adopted faith, he instituted various meetings for its promulgation, and on these his apprentice became one of the most faithful attendants. That faith in Christ became his personal faith likewise, and to that he adhered through a long, and useful, and honourable life. Succeeding, ultimately, to the business on the decease of Mr. Robson, Mr. Blackbird evinced the energy, and steadiness, and frugality, which, united, overcome adverse influences, and opposing interests. He was ever of cheerful and hopeful spirit. He lived not for himself alone but for others also. To the advancement and welfare of the honest and industrious, he willingly lent aid. On Public social worship he was a constant attendant. In the support of religious institutions he was always to be relied on. For the spread of Christian truth he was anxious. That truth animated him as a living principle in all time of health and strength; it was his support, consolation, delight, in the years of decaying vigour and activity. Gradually and gently his closing years led him to his rest. A considerable number of the members of Hanover Square Chapel, of which Christian society for many years Mr. Blackbird had been a regular and very efficient supporter, accompanied his remains from his late residence to Jesmond Cemetery, on Monday, November 26, the funeral services being conducted by the Rev. George Harris.

December 6, 1849, at Westgate Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne, aged 49, Mr. John Elliott.

December 7, 1849, at Leazes Lane, Newcastle-on-Tyne, aged 71, Mr. John Latimer.

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